

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel Claims 2 and 8 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein.

Please amend Claims 1, 7, and 16 as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A recording method for recording on a recording material using an ink containing a coloring material and a processing liquid for making the coloring material insoluble or coagulate, comprising:

a step of ejecting onto the recording material the ink, the ink having a  $K_a$  value of a first value; and

a step of applying the processing liquid onto the ink ejected on the recording material, the processing liquid having a  $K_a$  value of a second value larger than the first value,

wherein the processing liquid is applied onto the recording material after a rapid swell start point  $t_s$  passes after penetration of the ink into the medium so that the processing liquid is overlapped with the ink ejected on the recording material.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Previously Presented) A recording method according to Claim 1, further comprising a step of applying heat to the ink ejected in said ink ejecting step,

wherein the  $K_a$  value of the ink is not more than  $1 \text{ (ml.m}^{-2}\text{.msec}^{-1/2}\text{)}$ , the ink has a penetration property that increases with heat, and the  $K_a$  value of the processing liquid is more than  $1 \text{ (ml.m}^{-2}\text{.msec}^{-1/2}\text{)}$ .

4. (Previously Presented) A recording method according to Claim 1, further comprising the step of applying heat to a reaction product of the ink and the processing liquid after said processing liquid applying step.

5. (Previously Presented) A recording method according to Claim 1, wherein the  $K_a$  value of the processing liquid is not more than  $5 \text{ (ml.m}^{-2}\text{.msec}^{-1/2}\text{)}$ .

6. (Previously Presented) A recording method according to Claim 1, wherein the ink contains pigment.

7. (Currently Amended) A recording method according to Claim 1, ~~wherein the ink includes a black ink and a color ink,~~ further comprising a step of ejecting a second ink different from the ink having the  $K_a$  value of the first value,

wherein the ink having the  $K_a$  value of the first value is a black ink, and the second ink is a color ink, the black ink having a  $K_a$  value of not more than  $3 \text{ (ml.m}^{-2}\text{.msec}^{-1/2}\text{)}$  and the color ink having a  $K_a$  value of not less than  $5 \text{ (ml.m}^{-2}\text{.msec}^{-1/2}\text{)}$ , and after application of the processing liquid having a  $K_a$  value of not less than  $5 \text{ (ml.m}^{-2}\text{.msec}^{-1/2}\text{)}$ , the color ink is ejected.

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Previously Presented) A recording method according to Claim 1, wherein the ink and the processing liquid are ejected to the recording material by generating a bubble by application of thermal energy to the ink and to the processing liquid.

10. (Withdrawn) A recording apparatus comprising:  
ink ejecting portion for ejecting onto a recording material ink having a  $K_a$  value of not more than  $3 \text{ (ml.m}^{-2}\text{.msec}^{-1/2}\text{)}$ ;  
a processing-liquid ejecting portion for applying to the ink deposited on the recording material, a processing liquid having a  $K_a$  value of not less than  $5 \text{ (ml.m}^{-2}\text{.msec}^{-1/2}\text{)}$  to insolubilize a coloring material in the ink inside the recording material,  
wherein the processing liquid is applied to the ink after the ink is deposited on the recording material after a rapid swell start point ts passes after penetration of the ink into the medium.

11. (Previously Presented) A recording method according to Claim 1, wherein the  $K_a$  of the processing liquid is not less than  $5 \text{ (ml.m}^{-2}\text{.msec}^{-1/2}\text{)}$ .

12. (Previously Presented) A recording method according to Claim 11, wherein the  $K_a$  of the ink is not more than  $3 \text{ (ml.m}^{-2}\text{.msec}^{-1/2}\text{)}$ .

13. (Previously Presented) A recording method according to Claim 11, wherein the  $K_a$  of the ink is not more than  $1 \text{ (ml.m}^{-2}\text{.msec}^{-1/2}\text{)}$ .

14. (Previously Presented) A recording method according to Claim 1, wherein the ink has a first polarity and the processing liquid has a second polarity opposite from the first polarity.

15. (Previously Presented) A recording method according to Claim 1, wherein a concentration of a surface-active agent in the processing liquid is not less than the critical micelle concentration of the surface-active agent in pure water.

16. (Currently Amended) A recording method according to Claim 1 or 15, wherein a concentration of a surface-active agent in the ink is less than the critical micelle concentration of the surface-active agent in pure water.